

# 1921

Rex Granite Quarterly Magazine:  
Vol. 16, Summer 2019



**In Our Backyard: Quarry Park**

**Monument Profiles**

**Employee Spotlight**

**Supplying the Industry:  
Granite City Tool**



A close-up photograph of a hand with light-colored nail polish resting on a dark, textured granite surface. In the center of the hand's palm is an oval-shaped memorial portrait of a middle-aged man with short, light-colored hair, wearing a blue denim shirt. The background is a blurred granite surface with some faint white markings.

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## Colors of the Quarter

These two unique colors are in-stock, ready for customer tailored designs at a very quick turnaround time - ready to ship out with any existing orders!

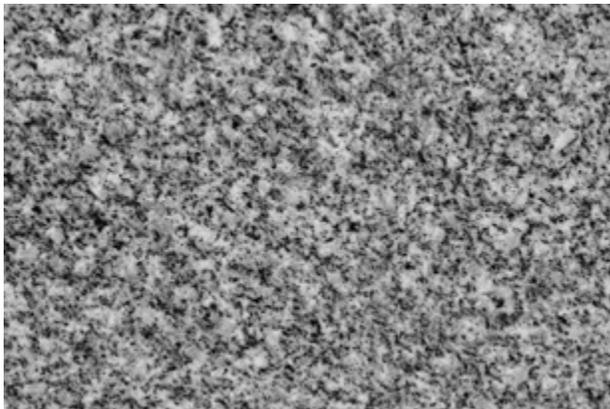
### Morning Rose

Quarried in Vermilion Bay, Ontario this pink granite makes for excellent sandblasting at a great value. We have a plethora of finished sizes in stock as well as plenty of block to produce custom designs.



### Georgia Gray

Quarried in Elberton, GA this light gray granite provides great contrast in lettering and pairs well with dark lithochrome paints. Available at affordable prices - we have blocks and finished stock in inventory ready for quick shipment on popular sizes!



# In Our Backyard:

## Quarry Park

*Coined The Granite City - our hometown of Saint Cloud has been known for its geological prowess for decades. One cultural centerpiece to the area for nearly the last twenty years that we want to highlight is the Stearns County Quarry Park and Nature Reserve.*

### History & Background

Since as far back as the 1870's when some of the first quarries were founded in the area, Central Minnesota's unique geological makeup has always been a key force that drives the local economy. This unique 683 acre park encapsulates this history perfectly. Featuring 20 different quarries within, the park has a rich history shared by many different granite companies. The first operation, Empire Quarrying Company opened up in 1913 to quarry the gorgeous Saint Cloud Red

Granite known to be used in various notable structures around the state like the Landmark Center and the Hill House in Saint Paul, MN. Over the land's history, a number of different companies held ownership of the property, keeping the local granite economy churning. It is unclear to this day exactly which companies worked which quarries, but the 20 different sites reflect a wide variety of shapes, sizes, depth, and complexity.



Quarrying operations eventually ended in the mid 1950's, and years later the land was sold from private ownership to Stearns County in 1992, before the park opened to the public in 1998.

## The Park Today

Today the park is a recreational hotbed for families, young people, outdoors enthusiasts, adventure junkies, history buffs, and more. Different quarries offer different opportunities for park-goers - with activities such as swimming, trout fishing, rock climbing, scuba diving, and



hiking all within a few minutes walk. Along with the recreational side of the park, the southern part of the property known as the Scientific and Natural Area offers a quieter escape to largely untouched and unique ecosystem. The SNA has been closely studied by scientists and educational institutions over the years due to its unique present-day hydrological activity and ancient geological significance.

## Liberty Derrick

One unique highlight to the entire park is the well-preserved Liberty Derrick (bottom). The derrick was originally utilized by Liberty Granite Company from the 1920's until the 1950's when the company ceased operations and it was left to mother nature. After fundraising and evaluation, the derrick was restored in 2005 through the joint work of park staff, industry experts, and local volunteers. In 2008 it was restored to full function and has been used for demonstrations every year since to celebrate the park and the rich granite history that has been synonymous with our area for so long.



1. Photograph, City of St. Cloud. Retrieved from <https://www.visitstcloud.com/things/quarry-park-nature-preserve/>  
2. Stearns County. Retrieved from <https://co.stearns.mn.us>

# Monument Profiles

## Outing Tornado Memorial

These two bench memorials were erected in Outing, MN - a small lake town in the northern part of Minnesota. On August 6, 1969 a massive tornado left its mark on the town. Nearly a mile and a half wide and sustaining winds of up to 260 miles per hour, the storm took the lives of 12 people and injured

another 70. 50 years later, the town is commemorating the event and the strength of the community with the erection of these two Northstar Black benches. The P2 boulder shape pedestal measures 2-6x0-6x2-4 and connects to an all polished 4-0x1-2x0-4 seat sitting atop a 0-10x0-6x-1-2 sawed side BRP leg.





## Peterson Memorial

We're very proud of this particular piece that required great attention to detail and superior craftsmanship. Many different creative elements went into this awe-inspiring barn memorial. The tablet is 3-6x0-8x2-2 polished 2 BRP along the roof. Supporting the tablet is a long 5-0x1-2x0-8 BRP 2" polished margin base. Laser etched horse and cow artwork is etched into the vases to round out the monument and tie together this intricate project.



## Mitchell Memorial

It's always an honor to make a special piece that celebrates a loved one's lifelong passion - and this basketball memorial is a great example. The Nagar Black tablet is all polished with a scoop cut out for the 10" Sentinel Red all polished basketball and measures at 2-4x0-10x3-0. The tall rectangular base is 2-0x1-2x0-10 all polished leaving space for a polished vase. The rim and net depictions were sandblasted skin dusted with orange and white lithochrome paint used to bring color to the art.

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# Supplying the Industry

## Granite City Tool



We chatted with Granite City Tool Sales Specialist Mark Eisenwinter to get an overview of the operation and some insights on his side of the industry.

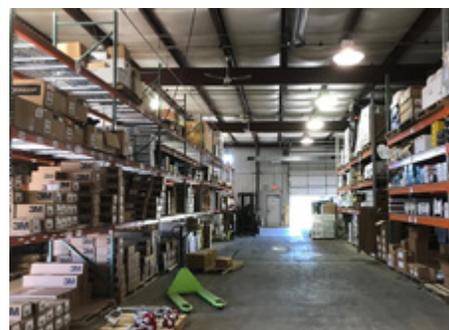
Founded in 1885, Granite City Tool has been around for nearly as long as the Central Minnesota granite industry. The company offers tools and supplies for fabrication, restoration, and maintenance of natural stone and quartz. GranQuartz purchased G.C.T. in 2016 to expand their market share. GCT specializes in the monument industry while GranQuartz offers solutions for counter-top fabrication as well as the concrete and construction industries. The GranQuartz reach is far and wide - having customers overseas and domestically with 13 locations across the United States.

With 28 years of experience in the business, one key to success that Mark

constantly stresses is *training*. Organizations need to understand terminology, different use cases for specific tools, and product functionality in order to succeed. The G.C.T. team's time spent educating their network of customers, listening to new ideas, and keying in on feedback are what keep the wheels of success churning.

One key challenge G.C.T. has adapted well to is the growing power of the internet. Paying close attention to the change in how customers purchase over the years. Because of this, they stay on top of the content and functionality of their website to make the purchasing process more convenient than ever.

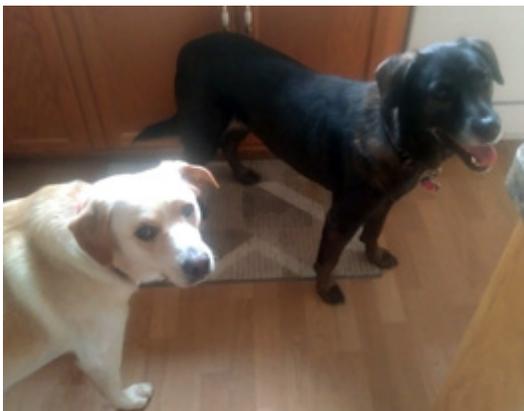
G.C.T. has provided quality products and services to Rex Granite since as far back as 1923, and are still a key partner of ours to this day. Mark and the team work very closely with us to put together the Annual MMS show each winter. Their talented team displays a number of different manufacturing techniques, tips and tricks, and new products throughout the event. The 4th annual show is coming up this December with many specials to be had from G.C.T., Weber Memorials, and Rex Granite!



# Spotlight: Angie Leischke

In today's digital world it's been important for us to stay connected with our customers, vendors, and industry partners through online channels, and Angie Leischke has hit the ground running in her role maintaining our digital presence! Our Facebook page, website, and email blast communications have been a well oiled machine since she joined the team 18 months ago. Besides digital communications, her responsibilities include order management and processing, proofing drawings, and greeting our wonderful customers at our new facility! Growing up in Duluth, MN she's always been big into the outdoors; frequently camping, going to the cabin, and downhill skiing as a kid.

After Duluth she went on to live in Princeton, MN and graduate from Princeton High School before finding her way to St. Cloud. She's enjoyed the area ever since and loves the opportunities and activities it provides for her daughter. When she isn't spending quality time with her daughter she keeps busy with a local sign and graphic shop she runs out of her home. She also enjoys taking her two dogs on hikes and loves to hit the road with her Harley Davidson.



# Spotlight:

## Mike Zniewski

Once again the apple doesn't fall too far from the tree at Rex Granite as we highlight another part of the family - President Mike Zniewski. Born and raised in St. Cloud, Mike grew up in the granite business on the east side of town attending Jefferson Elementary.



Just four blocks away from the shop, his father Carl worked his entire career alongside brothers Earl and Neil. After graduating from Apollo high school in 1977 he moved on to St. Cloud State working his way through college and paying the bills as a police dispatcher and school bus driver. He started learning the ropes in the office in 1983 as a book keeper and has worked alongside his partners Eric, Kurt and Gary ever since - with 36 years under his belt. Mike is a wealth of knowledge about all things in the granite industry and knows a thing or two about creating quality monuments. His primary responsibilities include finance, accounting, safety, sales, marketing, and HR. Overseeing large scale

improvements like purchases of new machinery and updates to various elements of the operation are some of his favorite aspects of his role. In his free time he loves to bike, work on home improvement projects, fiddle with new technology, and travel to warm places. He has been married to his wife Julie for 35 years and loves to spend time attending Vikings games and relaxing at the lake with his kids Emily (28), Mat (22) and Megan (21).





# VASES

- |                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| China Grey     | Sentinel Red  |
| Charcoal       | Blue Pearl    |
| Rex Black      | Emerald Pearl |
| Coral Blue     | Mahogany      |
| Tropical Green | Georgia Grey  |
| Coffee Pearl   | Morning Rose  |
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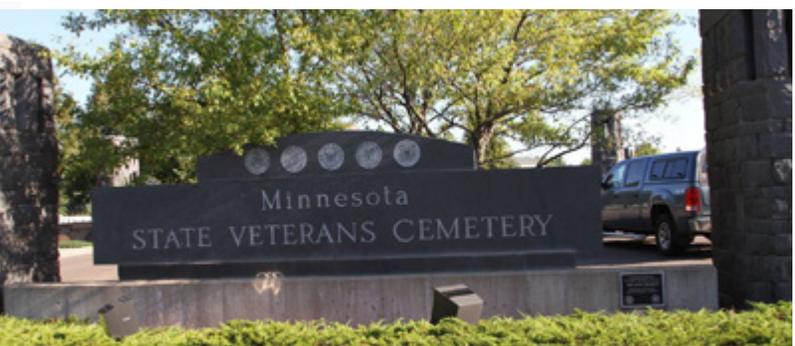
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# What's New?



Mid-America Monument Builders Association  
KANSAS · MISSOURI · OKLAHOMA · ARKANSAS

## MAMBA Show

Kurt Zniwski and Kris Koshiol took a trip down to the MAMBA Annual Convention in Quapaw, OK to learn about the latest and greatest in the industry. According to Kurt, connecting with longtime customers and meeting new ones was valuable time spent at the show. It was also a very educational trip. We gained new perspectives on types of stone to use, sandblasting, shape-carving, and even got an opportunity to learn new gold leafing techniques.

## Open House Is Coming!

We're already gearing up for an even bigger and better open house this upcoming winter in our new facility! Mark your calendars for December 6th, 2019 and RSVP by calling 320-252-2060 or emailing [sales@rexgranite.com](mailto:sales@rexgranite.com). Stop by to take a tour, check out different specials from exhibitors browse various demos, and grab some delicious lunch! *Space is limited* so sign up soon!



## Settled In

We officially feel at home in our new 3,000 sq ft office building and continue to upgrade as we just replaced the main roof of our shop with brand new steel, skylights and 100% LED lighting for better visibility and awesome energy savings!

## Cutting Edge

Our recently upgraded Pellegrini Robo Contour Saw has been a very productive addition to our shop with faster cutting speed than ever before and precise control in our cutting.



# Earl's Pearls

Never criticize someone until you have walked a mile in their shoes.



That way, when you criticize them, you'll be a mile away, and you'll have their shoes.



One student assigned to comment on 'books that helped me the most' replied, "My Mother's cookbook and my Father's checkbook."



I bought the world's worst thesaurus yesterday. Not only is it terrible, it's terrible.

# Rex Crossword

## Granite Colors



- |                |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|
| American Black | North Star      |
| Barre          | Paradiso        |
| Bellingham     | Rainbow         |
| Blue Pearl     | Rex Black       |
| Charcoal       | Rex Impala      |
| Coffee Pearl   | Rockville       |
| Colonial Rose  | Royal Emerald   |
| Coral Blue     | Rustic Mahogany |
| Georgia        | Silver Cloud    |
| Gold Star      | Taj Aurora      |
| Morning Rose   | Tropical Green  |

## Memorial Savings!

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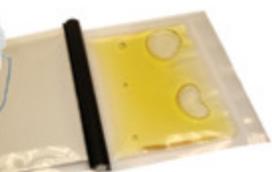


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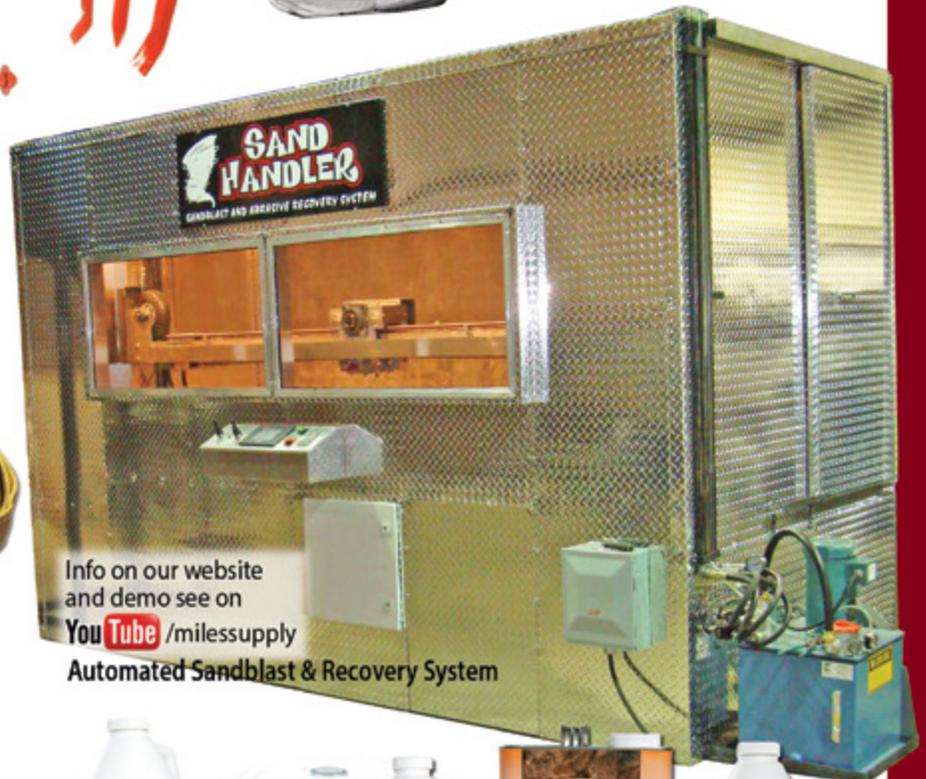
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